

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 221

By Pody

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize David Means Tomlinson upon his induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, agriculture has been a cornerstone of Wilson County since the county's founding in 1799, and those citizens involved in farming have always been a vital part of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly specially recognize those outstanding citizens who dedicate their lives to promoting the importance of agriculture in our society; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable individual is David Means Tomlinson, who has been inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame for his hard work and commitment to continuing the legacy of the family farm in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, David Means Tomlinson was born in Lebanon, Wilson County, on February 24, 1948, the first and only child of Frank and Nettie (Lemons) Tomlinson and the first grandchild of his paternal grandparents, Issac Means "Mr. Ike" Tomlinson and Flora Mae Bundy Tomlinson, whose farm was comprised of approximately 500 acres; and

WHEREAS, a seventh generation Wilson Countian, David Tomlinson was born into a farming family; his grandfather, father, and uncles farmed approximately 430 acres in Wilson County; and

WHEREAS, when he was seven, David Tomlinson moved from his grandparents' farm to a farm newly purchased by his parents; he has since resided on this farm, now known as Tomlinson Place, for more than sixty years; and

WHEREAS, David Tomlinson began farming at age ten, raising sheep, sows, and chickens, and grew his first tobacco crop at age thirteen; and

WHEREAS, while farming and raising livestock with his father, David Tomlinson met Anne Buehler at a neighbor's house in August 1966; Cupid's arrow struck quickly, but surely, and by Christmas of that year they were engaged; and

WHEREAS, during their engagement, Mr. Tomlinson split his time between farming his family farm in Tennessee and farming along with his future father-in-law, Lloyd Buehler, in Carlyle, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, David Tomlinson and Anne Buehler were married on April 20, 1968; the joy of their nuptials was tempered by the certainty of David being sent to serve in Vietnam after being drafted by the Army; and

WHEREAS, after undergoing basic training at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and infantry and advanced weapons training at Fort Lewis, Washington, Mr. Tomlinson was deployed to Long Binh, Vietnam, where he served for three months as an infantry soldier before voluntarily transferring to the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Squadron, 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry; he first served as a door gunner on a Bell UH1H helicopter and then as a door gunner and first echelon crew engineer for maintenance of the helicopter line at Vihn Long Airbase; and

WHEREAS, David Tomlinson flew approximately 700 combat flight hours in Vietnam and was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Combat Infantryman Badge, U.S. Army Aircraft Crewman Badge, United States Army Air Medal, and the Presidential Meritorious Unit Citation for his heroic conduct and valiant service; and

WHEREAS, Vietnam was a life-changing experience for David Tomlinson, and he returned home a survivor, but a very different man; desiring a quiet, peaceful life, he dedicated his energies to his family's heritage and returned to farming the land he loved with the assistance of his wife, Anne; and

WHEREAS, at the age of twenty-four, just three years after returning home from war, David Tomlinson was honored by the Wilson County Jaycees with their Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Young Farmer; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tomlinson served eight years on the Wilson County Farmer's Co-Op board of directors during the 1970s and later served as vice president and president pro tem; he was a director for the Tennessee Farm Bureau and an active member of the Wilson County and Tennessee cattlemen's associations during the 1980s and 1990s; and

WHEREAS, during the 1970s and 1980s, David Tomlinson operated a 120-head herd of Angus brood cows; during the mid to late 1980s, he raised registered Simmental cattle, and his herd was featured in advertisements for Ivomec Pharmaceuticals; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tomlinson always raised large amounts of hay, soybean, corn, wheat and tobacco on his farm; from the mid-1990s until his last tobacco crop in 2004, he held an approximately 14,000-pound base, the second largest tobacco allotment in Wilson County; and

WHEREAS, although he is an old school farmer, Mr. Tomlinson has always been attuned to scientific advancements and new and improved agricultural practices; he traveled with the Tennessee Farmer's Co-Op to the University of Illinois Agriculture Research Center for education on bovine and swine research and to Hereford, Texas, where he visited Sugarland Feedlot; and

WHEREAS, like all farmers, Mr. Tomlinson has experienced many lean years due to circumstances beyond his control but persevered to prosper during the good years; through it all, he remained true to himself and the family farm because agriculture is both his heritage and his birthright; and

WHEREAS, when Frank Tomlinson was sidelined by a stroke in 1971 and then passed away at the age of fifty-nine in 1979, David Tomlinson greatly missed his father's partnership, advice, and moral support, but he was fortunate to have men such as his uncle, Woodrow Tomlinson, James Ray Johnson, Robert Ray Speck, and Alvin McKee to fill that void; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tomlinson learned from his father the importance of being a good steward of the land, and he still loves the smell of the rich earth that "means the world" to him and his family; and

WHEREAS, David Tomlinson is now retired, meaning that he runs the farm instead of the farm running him, but he still raises cattle and hay every year; and

WHEREAS, he freely admits that he would have never succeeded or even survived as a farmer without the love and support of his wife of nearly fifty years, Anne, who has always given him energy and strength; they have been blessed with a daughter, Lisa A. Tomlinson, an attorney who practices in Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Tomlinson is an active member of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church, Blackhawk Vietnam Veterans Association, the American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Vietnam Veterans Association of Wilson County and a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association and Disabled American Veterans; he is also a member of the Cedar City Gun Club and the Nashville Gun Club, where he is an avid sporting clays shooter; and

WHEREAS, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame honors those dedicated citizens who have committed their lives to developing and maintaining the highest standards and principles in their chosen vocation, and it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly honor David Tomlinson for his valuable service to agriculture and the farming community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize David Means Tomlinson upon his induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame, as we reflect fondly upon his many contributions to upholding the agricultural traditions of Wilson County and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.